CHAPTER XV

Social

Calls are of two kinds, official and social.

Official Calls.

You will of course report yourself to your Collector on arrival in the Station. In addition, you must call officially on the Commissioner, if at the Headquarters of a Division, and on the District Judge, and also on any senior officials of other services that may be in the station, such as the D. I. G. Police, the Conservator of Forests, or Superintending Engineer. It is best to write a D.O. letter to these latter officers asking them when it would be convenient for them to see you, and call in accordance with the replies. The District Judge will probably want to see you to give some advice about your magisterial work.

If you go to Bombay for more than a day or two while Government is there, you will write your name in H. E. the Governor's book at the Secretariat, and, if in Poona, both in his book at the Council Hall, and in the book of the G. O. C. in C., Southern Command.

In Bombay or Poona you will call officially at his office on the Honourable the Chief Minister, and on the Honourable Minister in charge of the Revenue Department, and, if you are staying more than a very short while,

on all other Honourable Ministers also.* You will also always call officially on the Chief Secretary to Government.

If in Bombay for any length of time, write your name in the books of the Chief Justice of Bombay, the G.O.C., Bombay, and the Flag Officer Commanding, R.I.N. In Poona besides the book of the G. O. C. in C., Southern Command, write your name in that of the Brigade Commander, Poona.

When you write your name in the Government Book leave a card for H. E. the Governor's staff.

If you are in the Station when an Honourable Minister comes there on tour, you will call on him.

Social Calls.

As regards social calls, these are obligatory, and not a matter of personal inclination, as an official position is held to involve certain social duties. A bachelor or an officer, whose wife is not with him in the station, calls on all married ladies, leaving one card for the lady and one for her husband, and, if there is a grown up daughter living with her parents, a third card for her. You need not call on senior officers whose wives or daughters are not in the station (except for the official calls mentioned

*Extract from Government Circular No. 22590/34, Political and Services Department, dated 24th May 1938.

"4. Members of the All-India Services under the Government of Bombay, ... who have occasion to visit Bombay or Poona on official business should take the opportunity of calling on the Honourable Ministers, if time permits.

5. Calls should be made at the Secretariat in Bombay and at the place where the Honourable Minister usually works in Poona.

6. If a Minister is absent from his office or cannot receive the visitor when the call is made, the officer making the call should leave his card."

above). If there are troops at the station, you will call on all Regimental and other Officers' Messes, leaving two cards, one for " Col. X.Y.Z. " or whatever the name of the C. O. may be, and the other for " The Officers, the Nth Cavalry". You will also write your name in the visitors' book of the Officer Commanding the Station, if he has one.

If your wife is in the station, you will not pay the social calls on married ladies referred to above, but the ladies will come and call on your wife, and she will return their calls.

It is usual to pay social calls by going round and placing the appropriate cards in the lady's calling box hanging at the bungalow gate ; if this is not visible, drive up to the house and give the cards to a servant, and if the mistress sends out " to give salaams ", then you go in ; if she does not, you go away and make your next call. Do not send your cards by post.

It is easy to cavil at the absurdity of the calling system, but in the first place it is a custom with which it is unwise not to comply, and in the second it serves to notify to other people that you are in the station.

In Poona there is a "Calling League" which simplifies matters and you can get particulars at the Poona Club, if stationed there. But it does not relieve you of the necessity of the official calls mentioned above.

Social matters.

In conversation address your Collector and other senior officers as " Sir ". The same applies, of course, when you meet an Honourable Minister. Especially do this to all Military officers of, and above, the rank of Major, as they are so addressed by junior military officers

of your age and older. If any officer does *not* want you to call him " Sir ", he will tell you so, and it is preferable to be so told, rather than to be told off for *not* calling him " Sir ".

In this connection, in D. O. correspondence always address an officer as " Dear *Mr.* A " unless you know him familiarly enough to call him " A " in conversation. This applies to writing to your subordinates as well as to your superiors.

You will have to join the local Club or Gymkhana, as this is another obligation of official life. Even though you may be shy of thrusting yourself among comparative strangers, make a practice of going to the Club regularly ; it will probably rub off some unsuspected corners of your personality, to your lasting benefit. Even if you should find the Society at the Club uninteresting, you have in virtue of your position to fill a place in the social life of the station and to do your part to amuse and entertain the other residents, who may not have your resources of culture and interests. Golf, tennis, etc., and bridge are valuable aids to getting to know your fellows.

There are some conventions in dress which have to be observed ; e.g. in dining at Government House, Military Messes and at large formal dinner parties, tail coat, white waist-coat and stiff shirt are imperative.

White kidgloves are always to be worn at dances at Government House and long white gloves by ladies.

For other dinner parties a short coat and a black tie suffice. As a junior it is better to err on the side of formality than on the reverse, so when invited to dinner by your Collector or other Senior Officers, do not wear a softfronted shirt.

On ceremonial occasions, such as an arrival of the Governor, the correct dress is morning coat and top hat or white topi, but until you reach the position of a Collector a cloth lounge suit is permissible on these occasions. It is not correct to turn up at any formal function in a light coloured washing suit. Even when in camp shirt sleeves and no tie is an unsuitable costume in which to try cases or to receive callers. Both are occasions of a certain formality.

Presents. Ask your office to put up the Bombay Civil Services Conduct, Discipline and Appeal Rules, and read them. Though under rule 6 (3) you are permitted to receive fruit and flowers, and though there is no objection to accepting a few mangoes or a bunch of grapes from a country gentleman's own orchard or vineyard, yet you will find life easier if you make a definite rule never to accept *any* "Dalis" i.e. baskets of fruits of varying kinds, cakes etc., for such are often of more than "trifling value". If you accept such a Dali from a well-to-do merchant or landlord to whom the cost is of no consequence, you can hardly, without giving offence, refuse to accept them from others, including from those who cannot afford to make such presents, but who feel that they are socially bound to give them or that it would help their social or business prospects if they did. The rule never to accept any Dali is simple,

and, when known to your friends, will be appreciated and observed.

You will not, however, be able to escape the acceptance of garlands or flowers on various suitable and unsuitable occasions. But it is well to issue a definite order that garlands and fruit are *never* received from your own subordinates of whatever rank. It is embarrassing to be garlanded by a Mamlatdar whose administration you may have just been criticising with acerbity, or by a clerk with a large family who ought not to waste his money on flowers.